

on a free lunch, tendered by a group that wants to talk to one of us (or one of our staff members) away from ringing phones and office interruptions in a place where we can hear ourselves think—but rather on real problems which may exist and which we need to address.

The present zero tolerance rule mistakenly directs our attention to what some unfairly assume is the *per se* appearance of impropriety whenever a gift is tendered. I reject that assumption and I contend that it detracts from the Committee's proper function—which is to counsel our colleagues against activities which could constitute real impropriety and which we must marshal our resources to combat.

My view of each and every one of you is that you want to conduct yourselves ethically. I assume the best, not the worst, about everyone in this body.

And my view of lobbyists is that they perform an important and honorable function for us in the legislative branch, bringing us information about how bills may affect our constituents and our society as a whole. I do not assume that something illicit occurs every time a Member—or his or her staff—gets together with a lobbyist. But I do believe that it is our task as Members of the House of Representatives to make sure that we seek to understand the consequences of legislation for all Americans—not just the well-heeled, to make sure that we open our doors and our ears to the dedicated advocates who plead the case of the poor and disadvantaged.

Our present gift rule does nothing, absolutely nothing, to ensure that this House is accessible to all, but it does create problems which I, as ranking members of the Committee on Standards, believe we can avoid by adopting the Senate standard.

At our last meeting, my colleagues on the committee voted unanimously to endorse this rules change. We are telling you that this rules change is appropriate and it is sound. Please join us in approving it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me thank my good friend from California for the very kind words. It has been a real pleasure for me to work with the gentleman, and the Democrats and the Republicans. I think we did what the House asked us to do when we were given this charge, and I thank the gentleman for the great work that he has done. He has really been a stalwart and an extremely fine member.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask Members to vote for a new gift ban rule today not for themselves, but for their Nation's Capital. For Members, the gift ban represents the loss of trivial token gifts. For the District of Columbia, the gift ban has caused millions of dollars in lost revenue.

The District is just now emerging from a financial crisis that brought insolvency to the Nation's Capital. The Congress made great strides last Congress to hasten the District's recovery with the passage of the National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act (the Revitalization Act) in 1997. Last Saturday, a new, tough, fiscally prudent mayor and new City Council took the oath of office, ushering in new era in the Dis-

trict's political culture. Most importantly, downtown D.C. is coming back and is increasingly alive with people taking advantage of new reasons to go to downtown. Despite these great strides, however, the District's recovery remains in its infancy. District revenues are significantly dependent on tax receipts from downtown businesses. Moreover, these revenues have been flat, partly because of the effect of the gift ban. Small retail businesses have been particularly hurt. However, the most prominent example of the effect of the gift ban is the new MCI Center, the centerpiece of the revitalization of downtown D.C. Abe Pollin, the owner of the Washington Wizards, Capitals, and Mystics did the unheard of when he invested \$220 million of his own money into the construction of an arena in downtown D.C. when the District was insolvent and at its lowest point. In making this commitment to the city, Pollin relied in part on the gift rule in effect at the time that allowed tickets to be accepted as gifts. The MCI Center is an unusual example of a sports arena that has been built with private rather than public funds. It is unfair and unfortunate to have an abrupt change penalizing a private entrepreneur who has willingly taken on what in most jurisdictions is viewed as a public responsibility.

Private economic development is the key to maintaining the solvency of the District. Harmonizing the House gift rule with the Senate rule does not cost the Congress anything, but this change can mean millions to the city. If the Congress can't help us, at the very least, it should not hurt us. There is more than one way for the House to help the District. A reasonable gift ban would be a cost-free way for the Congress to help meet its obligation to continue to assist the recovery of the District of Columbia.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I strongly oppose amending House rule to increase the amount of gifts a member of Congress or their employees may receive, and am disappointed a recorded vote was not requested so that members would be held accountable to taxpayers for their vote.

There is a reason the institution of Congress is held in such low esteem by the American public: people simply don't believe we do the right things for the right reason, and that we are here to look out for our own interests rather than those of our constituents.

My experience is that that is not the case. But clearly we have a credibility problem and a trust problem. Increasing the gifts we can receive only reinforces that lack of trust and makes it harder for us to lead.

Congress needs to lead by example. We didn't today.

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER *pro tempore* (Mr. LAHOOD). Pursuant to section 3 of House Resolution 5, the resolution is considered read for amendment, and the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the resolution.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider is laid upon the table.

□ 1645

## PROVIDING FOR CERTAIN APPOINTMENTS AND PROCEDURES RELATING TO IMPEACHMENT PROCEEDINGS

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 2(a)1 of rule IX, I hereby give notice of my intention to offer a resolution which raises a question of the privileges of the House.

The form of the resolution is as follows:

H.R. —

*Resolved*, That in continuance of the authority conferred in House Resolution 614 of the One Hundred Fifth Congress adopted by the House of Representatives and delivered to the Senate on December 19, 1998, Mr. Hyde of Illinois, Mr. Sensenbrenner of Wisconsin, Mr. McCollum of Florida, Mr. Gekas of Pennsylvania, Mr. Canady of Florida, Mr. Buyer of Indiana, Mr. Bryant of Tennessee, Mr. Chabot of Ohio, Mr. Barr of Georgia, Mr. Hutchinson of Arkansas, Mr. Cannon of Utah, Mr. Rogan of California, and Mr. Graham of South Carolina are appointed managers to conduct the impeachment trial against William Jefferson Clinton, President of the United States, that a message be sent to the Senate to inform the Senate of these appointments, and that the managers so appointed may, in connection with the preparation and the conduct of the trial, exhibit the articles of impeachment to the Senate and take all other actions necessary, which may include the following:

(1) Employing legal, clerical, and other necessary assistants and incurring such other expenses as may be necessary, to be paid from amounts available to the Committee on the Judiciary under applicable expense resolutions or from the applicable accounts of the House of Representatives.

(2) Sending for persons and papers, and filing with the Secretary of the Senate, on the part of the House of Representatives, any pleadings, in conjunction with or subsequent to, the exhibition of the articles of impeachment that the managers consider necessary.

The SPEAKER *pro tempore*. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) to call up the resolution.

The Clerk will report the resolution at this time under rule IX.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 10

*Resolved*, That in continuance of the authority conferred in House Resolution 614 of the One Hundred Fifth Congress adopted by the House of Representatives and delivered to the Senate on December 19, 1998, Mr. Hyde of Illinois, Mr. Sensenbrenner of Wisconsin, Mr. McCollum of Florida, Mr. Gekas of Pennsylvania, Mr. Canady of Florida, Mr. Buyer of Indiana, Mr. Bryant of Tennessee, Mr. Chabot of Ohio, Mr. Barr of Georgia, Mr. Hutchinson of Arkansas, Mr. Cannon of Utah, Mr. Rogan of California, and Mr. Graham of South Carolina are appointed managers to conduct the impeachment trial against William Jefferson Clinton, President of the United States, that a message be sent to the Senate to inform the Senate of these appointments, and that the managers so appointed may, in connection with the preparation and the conduct of the trial, exhibit the articles of impeachment to the Senate and take all other actions necessary, which may include the following:

(1) Employing legal, clerical, and other necessary assistants and incurring such other expenses as may be necessary, to be